

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 FS-01 EB-07 TRSE-00 RSC-01

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R 271043Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3904

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY APRIS

USDOC WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, EAID, PFOR, LI

SUBJECT: GOL PLANS CONVENTION CENTER FOR OAU CONFERENCE

REF: MONROVIA 4607

1. AMBASSADOR HAS LEARNED FROM BRITISH AMBASSADOR THAT UK FIRM OF KUBITCH (PHONETIC) HAS OBTAINED CONTRACT TO DESIGN QTE OAU VILLAGE AND CONFERENCE COMPLEX UNQTE FOR THE OAU MEETING TO BE HELD IN MONROVIA IN 1977. SAME BRITISH FIRM WILL FORM JOINT VENTURE WITH GOL TO CONSTRUCT COMPLEX, WHICH WILL HAVE SEPARATE VILLAS FOR EACH MEMBER HEAD OF STATE (PERHAPS 40) AND SMALLER CABANAS FOR LESSER LUMINARIES, AS WELL AS BUILDING TO HOUSE CONFERENCE. AT LEAST PRELIMINARY DRAWING AND PLANS OF COMPLEX, WHICH MODELED AFTER SIMILAR FACILITY IN KINSHASA, HAVE ALREADY BEEN COMPLETED. THOUGH COMPLEX REPORTEDLY DESIGNED WITH A VIEW TOWARD FUTURE TOURISM PROMOTION, IT TO BE BUILT ON BUSHROD ISLAND WHICH QUITE DISTANT FROM MAIN MONROVIA BEACHES AND ADJACENT BO BUSY FREEPORT OF MONROVIA.

2. BRITISH FIRST SECRETARY SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED ABOVE TO ECON COUNSELOR, BUT FURTHER REPORTED THAT BRITISH DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION FIRM IS TO ARRANGE OUTSIDE FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT.

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THOUGH NO FIRM PRICE FOR THE COMPLEX HAS BEEN MENTIONED, FIGURES

OF BETWEEN \$15 MILLION AND \$45 MILLION HAVE BEEN BANDIED ABOUT IN THE PAST. SOURCE OPINED THAT FIGURE NEAR \$20 MILLION MIGHT BE MORE LIKELY. CONTRACTOR ARRANGED FINANCING PRESUMABLY WOULD BE AT OR NEAR CURRENT COMMERCIAL RATES AND TERMS.

3. COMMENT: CONCEPT OF MAJOR CONVENTION CENTER ON BUSHROD ISALDN IS MIND BOGGLING. THOUGH IBRD HAS FINANCED PAVING OF BY-PASS FREEWAY TO ISLAND TO RELIEVE TRAFFIC PRESSURE ON SINGLE, 2-LANE BRIDGE CONNECTION ISLAND TO CITY OF MONROVIA, AND WILL FINANCE WIDENING OF MAIN STREET ON ISLAND, IT HAS BALKED AT FURNISHING ADDITIONAL BRIDGE. WITH TRAFFIC TO AND FROM FREEPORT, AND WITH MUCH OF MONROV'S LIGHT INDUSTRY LOCATED IN VICINITY OF FREEPORT, ISLAND ALREADY SOMETHING OF A TRAFFIC NIGHTMARE. PICTURE OF 40 HEADS OF STATE WITH COTERIES OF ATTENDANTS FIGHTING THEIR WAY FROM CONFERENCE COMPLEX PAST FREE PORT TO THE BRIDGE BOTTLENECK EN ROUTE TO EXECUTIVE MANSION SURPASSES IMAGINATION. MOREOVER, BECAUSE OF DISTANCE FROM CITY, BEACHES, OTHER ATTRACTIONS, COMPLEX NOT LIKELY BECOME COMMERCIAL SUCCESS WITH TOURISTS. THEREFORE, FINANCING AT COMMERCIAL RATES WILL ADD CONSIDERABLY TO ALREADY ONEROUS DEBT BURDEN OF GOL.  
MANFULL

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